Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Amend claims 1, 8, 14 and 22; and

Add new claim 23 as follows:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A wooden member support retrofit system, comprising:

a wooden member support including a support base;

a wooden member supported by the wooden member support; and

a shim disposed between the wooden member support and sized to substantially prevent horizontal movement therebetween, ~~in a space formed between the base and the wooden member due to relative movement of the base and the wooden member over time caused by shrinkage of the wood away from the base, the shim extending the width of the wooden member support to prevent longitudinal movement of the shim relative to the wooden member and expanding to fill the space to maintain~~ wherein the shim maintains contact with the wooden member through vertical expansion thereof so that the weight of the wooden member is borne by the base of the wooden member support due to the shim translating the weight of the wooden member upon the shim to the support base.

2. (withdrawn) The system of claim 1, wherein the shim includes a deformable knife tab for securing the shim to the wooden member.

3. (withdrawn) The system of claim 1, wherein the shim includes an aperture for securing the shim to the wooden member by a fastener.

4. (withdrawn) The system of claim 3, including a non-load bearing lateral fastener for securing the wooden member in the wooden member support.

5. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the shim is comprised of a flexible, compressible material that expands to maintain contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

6. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the shim includes a spring that expands to maintain contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

7. (withdrawn) The system of claim 1, wherein the shim includes a one-way, ratchet mechanism which increases in thickness as the wooden member moves such that the shim maintains contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

8. (currently amended) A wooden member support retrofit system, comprising:

a wooden member support including a support base;

a wooden member supported by the wooden member support;

a non-load bearing lateral fastener for securing the wooden member in the wooden member support; and

a shim disposed between the wooden member and sized to substantially prevent horizontal movement therebetween, ~~in a space formed between the base and the wooden member due to relative movement of the base and the wooden member over time caused by shrinkage of the wood away from the base, the shim extending the width of the wooden member support to prevent longitudinal movement of the shim relative to the wooden member and expanding to fill the space to maintain~~ wherein the shim maintains contact with the wooden member through vertical expansion thereof so that the

weight of the wooden member is borne by the base of the wooden member support due to the shim translating the weight of the wooden member upon the shim to the support base.

9. (withdrawn) The system of claim 8, wherein the shim includes a deformable knife tab for securing the shim to the wooden member.

10. (withdrawn) The system of claim 9, wherein the shim includes an aperture for securing the shim to the wooden member by a fastener.

11. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the shim is comprised of a flexible, compressible material that expands to maintain contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

12. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the shim includes a spring that expands to maintain contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

13. (withdrawn) The system of claim 8, wherein the shim includes a one-way, ratchet mechanism which increases in thickness as the wooden member moves such that the shim maintains contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

14. (currently amended) A process of retrofitting a wooden member support system, comprising the step of:

measuring a space formed between a base of a wooden member support and a wooden member due to relative movement of the base and the wooden member over time;

selecting a shim sized to substantially prevent horizontal movement therebetween when disposed between the wooden member ~~extending the~~

~~width of the wooden member support to prevent longitudinal movement of the shim relative to the wooden member~~; and

placing the shim in the space formed between the base and the wooden member so that the weight of the wooden member is borne by the base of the wooden member support.

15. (original) The process of claim 14, wherein the selecting step includes the step of choosing a shim having a component for maintaining contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves, from the group consisting of a deformable knife tab, an aperture for a fastener, a flexible and compressible material, a spring, and a one-way ratchet mechanism.

16. (withdrawn) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a deformable knife tab connected to the shim.

17. (withdrawn) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a fastener passing through an aperture formed in the shim.

18. (original) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a flexible, compressible material connected to the shim that expands to maintain contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

19. (original) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a spring connected to the shim. 20. (withdrawn) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a one-way, ratchet mechanism connected to the shim which increases in thickness as the wooden member moves such that the shim

maintains contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

20. (withdrawn) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the shim to the wooden member with a one-way, ratchet mechanism connected to the shim which increases in thickness as the wooden member moves such that the shim maintains contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves.

21. (withdrawn) The process of claim 14, including the step of securing the wooden member and wooden member support together with a non-load bearing lateral fastener.

22. (currently amended) A process of retrofitting a wooden member support system, comprising the step of:

measuring a space formed between a base of a wooden member support and a wooden member due to relative movement of the base and the wooden member over time;

selecting a shim sized to substantially prevent horizontal movement therebetween when disposed between ~~extending the width of the wooden member support to prevent longitudinal movement of the shim relative to~~ the wooden member;

placing the shim in the space formed between the base and the wooden member so that the weight of the wooden member is borne by the base of the wooden member; and

securing the wooden member and wooden member support together with a non-load bearing lateral fastener; wherein the selecting step includes the step of choosing a shim having a component for maintaining contact between the wooden member and the base as the wooden member moves, from the group consisting of a deformable knife tab, an aperture for a

fastener, a flexible and compressible material, a spring, and a one-way ratchet mechanism.

23. (new) A shim for placement in a wooden member support retrofit system, comprising:

a rigid block sized to substantially prevent horizontal movement therebetween when inserted between a wooden support member; and

a spring for vertically expanding the rigid block within a gap formed between a support base of the wooden support member and a wooden member such that the weight of the support member is translated through the rigid block and the spring and borne by the support base.